

Message Text

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ACTION SS-30

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /031 W

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P 172024Z JAN 74

FM AMEMBASSY VIENNA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1252

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 VIENNA 0437

EXDIS/NOFORN

FROM US REP MBFR

EO: 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM NATO

SUBJ: MBFR: CONVERSATION WITH SOVIET DELOFF KVITSINSKIY,
JANUARY 16, 1974

1. AT LATTER'S REQUEST, US DEPREP SAW SOVIET DELOFF KVITSINSKIY FOR SHORT CONVERSATION ON EVENING OF JANUARY 16. US DEPREP ASKED KVITSINSKIY WHETHER SOVIETS WOULD HAVE NEW IDEAS TO PRESENT AFTER DECEMBER RECESS. KVITSINSKIY REPLIED THAT SOVIETS WANTED TO GET DOWN TO PRACTICAL BUSINESS, AND WANTED TO SEE HOW THINGS DEVELOPED. KVITSINSKIY ASKED WHETHER THERE WERE NEW ELEMENTS IN ALLIED POSITION. US DEPREP SAID ALLIES WOULD PRESENT THEIR PHASE I PROGRAM IN DETAIL WITH SOME NEW ARGUMENTS AND FACTS WHICH THEY BELIEVED WOULD BE CONFINCING. KVITSINSKIY SAID HE DOUBTED HE WOULD HEAR MUCH NEW IN PLENARY SESSIONS.

2. US DEPREP MENTIONED PRE-RECESS CONVERSATIONS WITH KVITSINSKIY IN WHICH LATTER HAD INDICATED HE SAW POSSIBILITY OF ACCEPTING ALLIED CONCEPT OF US-SOVIET FORCE REDUCTIONS IN FIRST PHASE WITH OTHER FORCES POSTPONED TO SECOND PHASE. US DEPREP ASKED WHETHER THIS WAS STILL PRODUCTIVE LINE TO FOLLOW. KVITSINSKIY REPLIED THAT IT COULD BE IF THE SOVIETS RECEIVED SUFFICIENT ASSURANCES OF THE TYPE REQUESTED.

3. US DEPREP SAID ALLIES MIGHT HAVE SOMETHING MORE SPECIFIC TO SAY ON THE TOPIC OF PHASING WITHIN THE NEXT FEW WEEKS. IT SEEMED
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TO HIM THAT THE MOST URGENT TASK WAS HOW TO GET A MORE ACTIVE DIALOGUE GOING IN THE NEGOTIATIONS. THE PARTICIPANTS MIGHT SEEK SOME PROCEDURAL UNDERSTANDING WITHOUT PREJUDICE TO OR COMMITMENT AS REGARDS THEIR POSITIONS ON SUBSTANCE TO AGREE ON SOME SPECIFIC

SUBJECT TO START THE DIALOGUE; IT WAS NECESSARY TO FIND A HANDHOLD ON THE OVERALL SUBJECT MATTER AT SOME POINT. IT WOULD BE LOGICAL IN THE CIRCUMSTANCES TO FOCUS ON US-SOVIET GROUND FORCES. THE SOVIETS COULD DEFER PRESENTATION OF THEIR VIEWS ON OTHER TOPICS OF INTEREST TO THEM IN THE INTERESTS OF STARTING A DIALOGUE ON US-SOVIET FORCES WITHOUT LOSING THEIR RIGHT TO RETURN TO THESE TOPICS. NEITHER SIDE WOULD BE REQUIRED TO CHANGE ITS POSITION ON SUBSTANCE.

4. KVITSINSKIY ASKED IN WHAT FORUM SUCH A DIALOGUE WOULD TAKE PLACE. US DEPREP REPLIED THAT THIS COULD BE INFORMAL GROUP OF SOME KIND. DETAILS OF THIS TOPIC COULD BE DISCUSSED SUBSEQUENTLY. KVITSINSKIY COMMENTED THAT HE ASSUMED THAT AN INITIAL DISCUSSION OF US-SOVIET GROUND FORCES IF AGREED WOULD NOT PRECLUDE THE SOVIETS ADVANCING THEIR WHOLE PROGRAM IN PLENARY SESSIONS OR ARGUING FOR EQUAL NUMBER US-SOVIET REDUCTIONS IN THE MORE INFORMAL DISCUSSIONS. US DEPREP POINTED OUT THAT THE US REJECTED THE CONCEPT OF EQUAL NUMBER REDUCTIONS AND THE INCLUSION OF AIR AND NUCLEAR FORCES. THE INFORMAL PROCEDURAL UNDERSTANDING WHICH THE ALLIES MIGHT DISCUSS WOULD NOT INVOLVE PRIOR COMMITMENT TO CHANGE OR ABANDON POSITIONS OF SUBSTANCE ON EITHER SIDE, BUT ONLY AGREEMENT TO START THE DIALOGUE BY DISCUSSING US AND SOVIET GROUND FORCES.

5. KVITSINSKIY EXPRESSED ANNOYANCE AT THE FEDERAL GERMAN POSITION AS HE HAD HEARD IT PRESENTED BY FRG REP BEHREND'S EARLIER THE SAME DAY. THE FRG IDEA THAT THERE SHOULD BE NO SUB-CEILINGS FOR EUROPEAN FORCES, WHICH HAD BEEN INSISTENTLY PURSUED, WAS MOST UNATTRACTIVE FOR THE SOVIETS. IT WOULD ALLOW THE BUNDESWEHR SCOPE FOR UNCONTROLLED INCREASE. IT ALSO DISCRIMINATED AGAINST SOVIET AND US FORCES, WHICH WOULD BE PLACED UNDER SPECIAL LIMITATION. THIS WAS UNSUITABLE FOR GREAT POWERS, ESPECIALLY THOSE WITH FOUR-POWER RESPONSIBILITY FOR GERMANY. THE FRG REP HAD SAID THERE WOULD BE NO FRG REDUCTIONS UNTIL 1977. THIS WAS TOO FAR DISTANT. HE HAD ALSO INDICATED THAT THE ALLIES WOULD BE WILLING TO EXCHANGE NUCLEAR WEAPONS (SIC) FOR SOVIET TANKS. THIS WAS A POOR CONCEPT. (COMMENT: COMPARE BEHREND'S ACCOUNT OF THIS SEGMENT OF THE CONVERSATION IN REPORT ON AD HOC MEETING OF JANUARY 16.)

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6. KVITSINSKIY CONTINUED THAT ANOTHER NEGATIVE ASPECT OF THE GERMAN POSITION WAS THEIR INSISTANCE ON THE COMMON CEILING IDEA. A COMMON CEILING IN GROUND FORCES WOULD REQUIRE TOO LARGE A CUT IN SOVIET FORCES IN CENTRAL EUROPE. MOREOVER, THE GERMANS WANTED TO INCLUDE US AND SOVIET FORCES AGAIN IN THE SECOND PHASE. THIS WAS A BAD IDEA. IT WOULD FURTHER CUT SOVIET FORCES. THERE WOULD BE NO RESERVE IN THE AREA.

7. US DEPREP POINTED OUT THAT THE SOVIETS HAD OFFERED TO REDUCE A TOTAL OF ABOUT 85,000 FORCES IN THEIR OWN PROPOSAL, WHEREAS THE ALLIED PROPOSAL SUGGESTED ONLY THAT THEY WITHDRAW 68,000 IN PHASE I. THIS MEANT THE SOVIETS STILL HAD A REMNANT OF ABOUT 20,000 THEY WERE PREPARED TO REDUCE ACCORDING TO THEIR OWN PROPOSAL.

WHY SHOULD KVITSINSKIY SAY THE ALLIED PROPOSAL CUT INTO THEIR RESERVES?

8. KVITSINSKIY REPLIED THAT SOVIET AUTHORITIES WOULD NOT ACCEPT AN UNEQUAL CUT. THEY COULD ACCEPT THE

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P 172024Z JAN 74

FM AMEMBASSY VIENNA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1253

S E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 2 VIENNA 0437

EXDIS/NOFORN

FROM US REP MBFR

COMMON CEILING ONLY IF AIR FORCE MANPOWER WERE INCLUDED. US DEPREP ASKED WHY THIS WAS SO. KVITSINSKIY REPLIED THAT, WITH AIR FORCE MANPOWER ADDED ON BOTH SIDES, THE TOTAL WAS NEARLY EQUAL, WITH A DIFFERENCE OF APPROXIMATELY 10,000 IN FAVOR OF THE WARSAW PACT. THIS DIFFERENCE WAS NOT SO BIG IT COULD NOT BE OVERLOOKED. US DEPREP ASKED WHETHER ALL FORCES IN THE AREA INCLUDED IN THE AREA INCLUDING AIR DEFENSE WERE INCLUDED IN SOVIET CALCULATIONS. KVITSINSKIY REPLIED THAT THIS WAS THE CASE.

9. US DEPREP ASKED WHY SOVIETS SHOWED SUCH PERSISTENT INTEREST IN INCLUSION OF AIR FORCE MANPOWER. KVITSINSKIY REPLIED THAT INCLUDING AIR FORCE MANPOWER WAS THE KEY TO EQUAL REDUCTIONS. MOREOVER, SOVIET MILITARY DOCTRINE HELD THAT THE AIR FORCES WERE THE CUTTING EDGE OF ATTACK. IT SEEMED CLEAR THAT IT WOULD BE TOO DIFFICULT TO BASE REDUCTIONS ON AIRCRAFT AS SUCH BECAUSE THEY WERE TOO DIFFERENT FROM ONE ANOTHER AS REGARDS TYPE AND ROLE. EVEN AN EFFORT TO COMPARE GROUND FORCE EQUIPMENT IN DETAIL WOULD BE TOO COMPLEX. (SIC) HOWEVER, SOVIET MILITARY EXPERTS CONSIDERED THAT IT WAS NECESSARY TO HAVE A CERTAIN NUMBER OF MEN TO SERVICE AN AIRCRAFT. IF AIR FORCE MANPOWER WERE DECREASED, A CERTAIN NUMBER OF PLANES WOULD BECOME USELESS. BUT THE MAIN THING WAS THAT REDUCTIONS MUST BE EQUAL OR THEY COULD NOT BE SOLD TO SOVIET AUTHORITIES. KVITSINSKIY MENTIONED IN THIS CONNECTION THE SPEECH BY US SECDEF OF 7 JANUARY AND ASSERTED SECDEF HAD SAID THERE WAS A MILITARY BALANCE IN CENTRAL EUROPE. WHY WOULD ALLIED NEGOTIATORS CONTRADICT THEIR OWN AUTHORITIES?

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10. US DEPREP COMMENTED THAT WITH LUCK IT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE TO REACH AGREEMENT ON PHASE I OF THE ALLIED PROGRAM THIS YEAR. IF SO, THE PARTICIPANTS COULD GET TO PHASE II IN A REASONABLE TIME. KVITSINSKIY SAID SOVIET REDUCTIONS WOULD TAKE MORE THAN ONE YEAR TO IMPLEMENT FOR THE PRACTICAL REASONS OF LACK OF ACCOMMODATIONS WHICH HE HAD PREVIOUSLY MENTIONED. HE INDICATED THAT THE SECOND "SUB-PHASE" OF THE NEGOTIATIONS, IF THERE WAS TO BE ONE, SHOULD START BEFORE THEN.

11. KVITSINSKIY THEN RETURNED TO IDEA OF PROCEDURAL UNDERSTANDING TO BEGIN FOR EAST-WEST DIALOGUE. HE INDICATED THE SOVIETS WERE HAVING CONSIDERABLE PROBLEMS WITH THEIR ALLIES AS REGARDS PARTICIPATION IN EMISSARY GROUPS AND SAID THAT SOCIAL GATHERINGS WHERE THIS PROBLEM WAS NOT SO ACUTELY POSED WOULD BE MUCH PREFERABLE FOR SOVIETS. HE SAID MOSCOW OBVIOUSLY COULD GIVE NO ANSWER AS TO THE IDEA OF A PROCEDURAL BEGINNING OF EAST-WEST DIALOGUE UNTIL ALLIES WERE IN POSITION TO ADVANCE DETAILS.HUMES

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